

## Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 STATE 017169

14

ORIGIN EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04

RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03 NSCE-00 NSC-10 /059 R

DRAFTED BY EA/P:AHROSEN:PP

APPROVED BY EA/P:AHROSEN

EA/PRCM - MR. BROOKS

S/PRS - MR. KING

----- 097138

R 252211Z JAN 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USLO PEKING

UNCLAS STATE 017169

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CH, US

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING ON KOSH CASE

1. HERewith PERTINENT EXTRACTS ON KOSH CASE FROM  
DEPT JAN. 25 PRESS BRIEFING.

Q. WHAT IS THE SITUATION WITH MR. KOSH NOW?

A. WE HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THE AUTHORITIES OF  
THE PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA. WE HAVE ASCERTAINED  
THAT THE AMERICAN OFFICIAL, MR. KOSH, WHO WAS IN THE  
PARACELS AT THE TIME OF THE CLASH, IS, IN FACT, IN PRC  
HANDS.

WE REGRET THAT THIS HAD TO HAPPEN, THAT HE WAS THERE  
ON THE DISPUTED TERRITORY, BUT WE THINK THAT HE OUGHT  
TO BE RELEASED SOON.

I HOPE TO HAVE FURTHER INFORMATION AS TO HIS  
WELFARE, LATER ON. I DON'T HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL  
INFORMATION EXCEPT THAT THEY HAVE ACCOUNTED FOR HIM.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 017169

Q. JOHN, YOU SAY THAT YOU HOPE THAT HE WILL BE RELEASED

LATER -- OR DO YOU HAVE ANY REASONS FOR THAT? HAVE YOU BEEN GIVEN ANY REASON TO HOPE -- BY CHINA?

A. I JUST SAID THAT WE THINK HE OUGHT TO BE RELEASED. I DON'T HAVE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION. IT'S STILL A LITTLE AMBIGUOUS RIGHT NOW. I SAID, WHEN WE GET SOME ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WE WILL PASS IT ON.

Q. WHERE DID YOU FIND THIS OUT? HERE?

A. HERE, YES.

Q. WHEN WAS THIS? TODAY?

A. YES. CONVERSATIONS BEGAN EARLIER THIS WEEK.

Q. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE HIS TASKS ON THE ISLANDS? WHAT WAS HE DOING THERE?

A. WELL, HE DIDN'T HAVE A TASK. THE WAY THIS STORY UNFOLDED, AS IT WAS TOLD TO ME, IS THAT THIS MAN -- HIS ASSIGNMENT IN THE DAO OFFICE WAS TO REPORT ON VIETNAMESE NAVAL ACTIVITIES OUT OF DA NANG, AND THAT HE HAD BEEN INVITED ALONG ON WHAT WAS THEN THOUGHT TO BE A ROUTINE, 72-HOUR PATROL, I BELIEVE, AND THE VESSEL GOT CAUGHT UP IN THE CLASH AS I UNDERSTAND IT, AND THE VESSEL COMMANDER, FOR WHATEVER REASONS -- WELL, LET ME JUST SAY THAT HE WAS PUT ASHORE ON PATTLE ISLAND, WHICH IS ONE OF THE PARACELS.

Q. HE WAS PUT ASHORE FOR WHAT REASON?

A. FOR WHAT REASON, I CAN'T ACCOUNT FOR. I DON'T KNOW.

Q. WHAT DID YOU SAY HIS DUTIES WERE? REPORT ON VIETNAMESE NAVAL ACTIVITY OUT OF DA NANG?

A. YES

WE HAVE GONE OVER THIS A COUPLE OF TIMES.  
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 017169

Q. DOES THE UNITED STATES ALSO INQUIRE ABOUT THE STATUS OF OTHER PRISONERS OR OTHER PERSONS WHO ARE TAKEN BY THE CHINESE IN THE PARACELS ENGAGEMENT?

A. NOT TO MY KNOWLEDGE -- SO FAR AS I KNOW, UNLESS YOU HAVE INFORMATION I HAVEN'T SEEN, THIS SEEMS TO BE AN ISOLATED CASE OF A SINGLE INDIVIDUAL. I HAVEN'T

HEARD OF ANY OTHERS.

Q. THERE WERE VERY MANY SOUTH VIETNAMESE --

A. OH, THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE -- SORRY, I DON'T KNOW THAT.

Q. JOHN, WHAT WOULD BE YOUR DESCRIPTION OF HIS PRESENT STATUS? WOULD THAT BE "PRISONER" OR WHAT?

A. I HAVEN'T HAD TIME, REALLY, TO THINK OF WHAT HIS STATUS MIGHT BE.

Q. DO THE CHINESE SAY WHAT CONDITION HE IS IN?

A. I DON'T HAVE THAT INFORMATION.

Q. WELL JOHN, HAS THERE BEEN ANY PROTEST FROM THE CHINESE ABOUT THE PRESENCE OF AN AMERICAN CITIZEN ON TERRITORY THAT THEY CLAIM TO BE THEIRS?

A. NOT TO MY KNOWLEDGE. BUT IF THAT'S DIFFERENT, I'LL LET YOU KNOW.

Q. WHEN YOU SAY HE'S IN THEIR HANDS -- DO YOU MEAN ON PATTLE ISLAND, OR ON THE MAINLAND?

A. I DON'T KNOW.

Q. HAVE WE HAD CONSULAR ACCESS TO THIS MAN? OR --

A. NO

Q. DO YOU KNOW WHERE IN THE PRC HE IS BEING HELD?

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 017169

Q. JOHN, IT SEEMS THAT WE HAVE ONLY THE SPAREST OF INFORMATION ABOUT THIS, AS A RESULT OF OUR CONTACTS WITH THE PRC HERE. HAVE WE ASKED FOR SOME FURTHER CLARIFICATION?

DO YOU EXPECT SOME SOONER --

A. WELL, LOOK. OBVIOUSLY, WE ARE CONCERNED ENOUGH ABOUT THE WELFARE AND THE WHEREABOUTS OF THIS MAN AS WE WOULD IN ANY CASE, TO EXPRESS OUR INTEREST AND CONCERN TO THE CHINESE -- WHICH WE HAVE DONE.

Q. JOHN, THE QUESTIONS TO WHICH YOU ARE ANSWERING, "I DON'T KNOW," DOES THAT MEAN THAT YOU PERSONALLY DON'T HAVE THAT INFORMATION, OR THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT

DOESN'T HAVE THAT INFORMATION?

A. I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH INFORMATION WE HAVE.

I'M TELLING YOU WHAT I KNOW ABOUT IT.

Q. JOHN, MAYBE THIS IS OLD GROUND, JOHN, YOU MAY HAVE COVERED IT, BUT I WASN'T HERE.

WHAT IS THE POLICY TOWARDS QUEMOY AND MATSU NOW?  
HAS THERE BEEN ANY CHANGE IN THAT POLICY?

A. I'M JUST NOT IN A POSITION TO GET INTO THAT AT THIS MOMENT.

Q. JOHN, CAN YOU SAY HOW THE INFORMATION WAS CONVEYED?  
WHO TOLD WHOM?

A. IT WAS DONE HERE. EXACTLY WHO TOLD WHOM, I DON'T KNOW.

Q. I WONDER IF YOU COULD CLARIFY ONE STATEMENT THAT YOU MADE. WHEN YOU SAID, "WE REGRET THAT HE WAS THERE ON DISPUTED TERRITORY", IS THAT IN THE FORM OF A VERY OFF-HAND U.S. APOLOGY TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC, OR IS THAT JUST A REGRET THAT THE WHOLE THING  
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 017169

HAPPENED?

A. THAT IS A STATEMENT OF OUR FEELING ABOUT IT. WE REALLY DON'T NEED INCIDENTS LIKE THIS, DO WE?

Q. BUT, I MEAN, IT IS NOT A FORMAL -- NO FORMAL APOLOGY HAS GONE TO THE PRC?

A. TO MY KNOWLEDGE, NO.

Q. JOHN, CAN I INFER FROM THAT THAT INSTRUCTIONS HAVE GONE OUT THAT HENCEFORTH CIVILIAN OBSERVERS FOR THE

THE DEFENSE ATTACHE'S OFFICE IN DANANG AND ELSEWHERE IN VIET-NAM ARE NOT TO GO ON MISSIONS OF THIS KIND?

A. NOT NECESSARILY. I DON'T KNOW. I AM NOT AWARE OF ANY SUCH INSTRUCTIONS. I MEAN, HE WAS DOING HIS JOB, AS FAR AS WE KNEW, AND THERE WAS THIS MISHAP. OBVIOUSLY IT IS SOMETHING TO BE REGRETTED.

Q. BY THE MISHAP OF THE CHINESE COUNTERACTION,  
IS THAT WHAT YOU MEAN?

A. NO, NO, THAT HE FOUND HIMSELF IN THIS SITUATION.

Q. I TAKE IT BY YOUR ANSWER THAT THE U.S. HAS NO  
POSITION ON WHO IS RIGHT OR WRONG IN THE DISPUTE.

A. NO. WE HAVE STAYED OUT OF THAT. KISSINGER

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** POW, WELFARE & WHEREABOUTS, ISLAND CLAIMS, PRESS CONFERENCES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 25 JAN 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** n/a  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** n/a  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:**  
**Disposition Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1974STATE017169  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** AHROSEN:PP  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** n/a  
**From:** STATE  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1974/newtext/t19740114/aaaaamzw.tel  
**Line Count:** 232  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE  
**Office:** ORIGIN EA  
**Original Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 5  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** shawdg  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 22 FEB 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <22 FEB 2002 by elbezefj>; APPROVED <26 NOV 2002 by shawdg>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING ON KOSH CASE  
**TAGS:** PFOR, CH, US, VS, (KOCH)  
**To:** PEKING  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005